

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Parkside Middle School

Stourbridge Road, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire B61 0AH

Inspection dates:

4 and 5 February 2025

Outcome

Parkside Middle School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Parkside Middle School welcomes everyone. Staff forge great working relationships with pupils and provide high-quality pastoral care. Pupils know there is always an adult to turn to who can resolve any issues. This helps them to feel safe. Pupils attend school regularly.

The school has ensured that pupils learn knowledge in a logical order. There are high expectations for what pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), can achieve. Across their different subjects, pupils meet these expectations and learn well. Educational visits and guest speakers add significantly to pupils' experience.

Pupils' behaviour meets the high standards set for them. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in classrooms and corridors. Pupils are well mannered. They become confident, articulate young people, well prepared for high school.

Pupils learn to respect others, including those different from themselves. They have many opportunities to develop their character and talents. For example, through the school council, pupils have opportunities to contribute to the life of the school. Pupils can act as subject leaders, house captains or mentors. A high proportion of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, take part in a wide range of clubs.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Pupils study a broad and ambitious curriculum. In each subject, leaders have designed the curriculum carefully so that pupils learn new knowledge based on what they already know. This helps pupils make sense of their learning and remember it in the longer term. Pupils make good progress through the taught curriculum. Sometimes, however, teaching

does not encourage pupils to reflect on their learning. This can limit some pupils from deepening their understanding.

The school develops pupils' literacy effectively using several strategies. It identifies key vocabulary for pupils to learn. Across the curriculum, staff develop pupils' reading skills. The school supports pupils who struggle with reading well, providing teaching in phonics when necessary. There is a strong reading culture in the school, supported by rewards for those who read most widely.

Teachers ensure that they put the curriculum into practice as intended on a day-to-day basis. They use resources well to support learning. The school places an explicit focus on oracy and helping pupils provide more extended verbal contributions. However, teachers' explanations sometimes lack precision, for example by using general or slightly inaccurate terminology. This hinders pupils' ability to fully grasp new concepts or learn subject-specific vocabulary.

Staff check learning well in class to help identify any misconceptions. Teachers ask questions that carefully check what pupils know. They use this information to adapt the learning in both the short and the medium term. Pupils know how to improve their work.

Pupils in the mainstream autism base are fully part of school life. All pupils with SEND follow the full curriculum. Leaders accurately identify their learning needs. They provide detailed guidance that ensures that the needs are met and these pupils make strong progress.

The school's behaviour policy is clear and effective. Staff put it into practice fairly. They help pupils who display challenging behaviour to respond in a more appropriate way. Pupils are keen to answer in class and collaborate well. They present their work with good care.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are at the heart of the school. Above all, pupils are listened to both in their opinions about the school and in relation to any personal difficulties. Pupils understand the school's values. They develop a secure understanding of personal safety, relationships and social issues as part of a well-planned programme. The school delivers an effective programme of careers guidance that builds through the year groups.

Leaders have continued to review and enhance the school's provision since the last inspection. They seek to work well with parents and carers. Leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils make the most of the school, for example by encouraging them to apply for positions of responsibility. Staff believe that leaders are considerate of their workload and ready to listen to their views.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In the classroom, pupils who have grasped the key knowledge are sometimes not given the opportunity to deepen their understanding. As a result, they do not make the very best of the challenging curriculum on offer. The school should ensure that staff have the expertise in how to extend and deepen activities so that all pupils make every possible gain in their learning.
- Teachers' explanations sometimes lack the precision that they need. Consequently, pupils do not understand concepts in sufficient detail or learn the more specific vocabulary in a particular subject. This results in pupils' learning not being as secure as the school expects. The school should ensure that all staff are able to explain ideas to pupils accurately and precisely.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in September 2019.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	116959
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10343837
Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	9 to 13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	604
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Claire Blincoe
Headteacher	Natalie Mancini
Website	www.parkside.worcs.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 September 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Parkside Middle School shares its site and buildings with Meadows First School.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with autism. Some of these pupils are on the middle school roll and some are on the roll of Meadows First School.
- The headteacher took up her post in September 2021.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provision.
- The school meets the relevant requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have

taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator and other senior leaders.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body and four other governors. He also spoke to a school improvement adviser by telephone.
- The inspectors spoke with pupils at social times and with groups of pupils more formally.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documents. These included minutes of governing body meetings and information about pupils' behaviour, attendance, the school's curriculum, self-evaluation and improvement planning. The school's website was also checked.
- The inspectors took account of responses to Ofsted Parent View, the free-text comments and correspondence with parents. The inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's survey for staff and pupils.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.

Inspection team

Martin Spoor, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Deborah James

Ofsted Inspector

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